

The Athenian Mercury.

Saturday, March 9. 1695

Quest. 1.

NOT long since I was passionately in Love with a virtuous Lady, of equal Age and Fortune with my self, and well descended; which I acquainted her with in a Letter: But she had no sooner receiv'd it, but she rejected my offer, refusing to joyn any company where she saw me present, and avoiding me as much as possible, being at the same time, as I understood, courted by a young Gentleman much above my Fortune, who continu'd his Courtship for about two months, tho after all she declin'd his Courtship, slighted him, and sent for me, and shov'd me all his Letters, telling me if I'd prove constant, she'd be Eternally mine. But within a week after I had another proposal made me from a virtuous and beautiful young Lady, of a much greater Fortune and as well educated as the former. Now I desire your advice, (and resolve to be govern'd by it) whether I can justly and honourably embrace the latter offer, and reject the former, there never having been any absolute promise between us, my Inclinations being I confess, much more for the latter.

Ans. If you did not Engage your self to the first, there's no reason why you shou'd not embrace the more advantageous Proposals of the latter. But by the manner of the Expression [that you made no Absolute Promise] you seem to imply that some sort of promise was made, and 'tis probable enough that you might make her some such returns for her obliging offer; which if you did, and she understood it as the accepting it, you can't, we think, honourably get clear of the first Engagement.

Quest. 2. I've wrote before on the following subject, but cou'd receive no answer. I've been too often prevail'd upon by the allurements, &c. what's your advise in this matter?

Ans. Marry!

Quest. 3. I'm about sixteen years old, and have learnt several Languages, and read something of Natural Philosophy; yet, the Moon being ill posited in my nativity, I'm of a very ill utterance, for tho I don't stammer, I want words to express my self on any matter, to that degree that makes me ridiculous in company, and overcome in any dispute I undertake, even when I know I've the better of the cause. Pray your advice how I may help my self in this infirmity?

Ans. For the Moon, we suppose it might be any where above or under the Earth, and yet not so much to the business as Tenterdon Steeple to Goodwins Sands; we having often declar'd our Judgment that there's nothing of certainty in that sort of Divination: Wherein if

they cou'd do any thing, one wou'd expect they shou'd be exact, at Weather: tho to prove they are not so, there needs no more than comparing one Almanack with another, the best of which more often miss then hit, and those who have had the greatest Fame, not having been so kind to tell us any thing of the great Snows, and Cold that we have had this Winter. But to let that pass, and come to the first of the Question: We have known several who have been troubled with the same infirmity, who have yet in Time, and by Conversation, obtain'd a tolerable freedom of discourse; which we doubt not but you may do as well as others, if you have the Judgment to chuse your company right. But till you have a greater fluency of Expression, what need you enter into disputes at all, especially with any but your Friends? Tho if you do, 'tis but thinking before you speak, and laying the more sence in fewer words; above all things taking heed of passion which will hinder you from having clear notions of things, without which you can never be happy in your expression.

Quest. 4. By what means shall a good Christian, who is afflicted with deprivation of temporal good, know whether it proceeds from his Parents or his own sins? That on a due Examination, finding neither, he may be encourag'd to take it patiently, as being the pure hand of providence.

Ans. He ought, in the first place, to be sure of his supposition; and that it may be justly said of him, as our Saviour did of the blind-man; "Neither this man hath sin'd nor his Parents. In order to which, his Examination shou'd be impartial, yet modest in relation to his Parents crimes, tho severe in respect of his own: Whether neither have been guilty of any notable crime (for that must be our Saviour's meaning, since no man lives and sins not) for which, as God threatens, he visits the Iniquity, of the Fathers on their Children, sometimes to the 3d and 4th Generation; tho this principally and most frequently, if not almost always, when the Children tread in their Fathers steps, and are guilty of the same, or equal wickedness. There's no doubt but the Parents sins have too often a natural and, we may say, necessary Influence on the unhappiness of their posterity, as in most kinds of Intemperance, which not rarely affect the body, and oftner the Estate of those who are so unhappy to ow their beings to such as have had no more care of what they have brought into the World. And 'tis so plain, that the very heathens have observ'd that an Estate unjustly gotten, is not likely to prosper. But besides this tho the Curse causeless shan't come, yet when passionate men let fly their imprecations on wicked disobedient Children, who don't grow better, it seems not disagreeable to

the Justice of providence to confirm them, with a secret blast on their Estates; and this, it may be, in some Instances, even when they repent of their bad lives, tho' then their temporal misfortunes may be over-ruled to the advantage of what's of much greater concerns, and moment. If he finds nothing of this in his parents, 'tis well if he discovers not some guilt in himself, on a strict Examination: For thus much is certain, that sin is the cause of all affliction and therefore a man is unjust, who complains of its punishment, tho' God is just and true and holy in all his ways, and does not delight in the torment and unhappiness of his Creature; he does not, it's certain, afflict willingly, the consequence of which seems to be, that he never out of his arbitrary absolute will, lays any heavy weight on his Creatures: And even in the Case of Tryal, as with *Job*, the very notation of the word, as well as the History, implies something to be purged and removed, that was before amiss; which in him was his wonderful high opinion of his own justice and righteousness, deferring too much to himself, and fancying he was hardly dealt with and could make his cause good before God, tho' when God had once spoke to him out of the *Whirlwind*, he soon abhor'd himself in dust and ashes. We ought therefore carefully to enquire, in such an affliction as the querist mentions, or any other that lies heavy upon us, if we can, and no other remarkable failure in our lives, yet whether we have not been at least guilty of *Job's* fault, and thought too well of our selves, and too ill, and severely of that blessed Being, all whose chastisements to good men are medicinal, and in order to make 'em still more partakers of his holiness. And if in none of these things our hearts condemn us, we are to believe that our afflictions are for the example of others, or to perfect our Graces, and obtain us a brighter reward in Heaven: And at the same time we must consider many of these things are no other than the natural effects of our first-parents Error, and the common miseries of life; as well as often of our own personal Imprudence and Folly. In which, as well as in all other instances, if there be any that won't be reach'd by what has been here said, we must still take care to justify and glorify God, whose ways indeed are unsearchable, but always righteous; and therefore it's much the safer, and modest way to blame our selves in general, tho' it may be we can't always discover the particular cause of our affliction, than to murmur or repine against Providence, and charge God foolishly.

Advertisement.

Mr. Sault's Translation of the Second Volume of *Malbranche's* Search after Truth, is now Published, being A Treatise of the Nature of the Humane Mind. To which is added, The Author's Defence against the Accusations

of Monsieur de la Ville: Also, The Life or Father Malbranche of the Oratory at Paris, with an account of his works, and several particulars of his Controversy with Monsieur Arnaud Dr. of Sorbon, and Monsieur Regis Professor in Philosophy at Paris. Written by Monsieur Le Vassor lately come over from Paris. Done out of French from the last Edition, by Mr. Sault Printed in Octavo for John Dunton at the Raven in Jewen-Street.

The Fifteenth Volume of the *Athenian Mercury* is now published, Dedicated to the *Findrick Lady*, resolving all the most nice and curious Questions proposed by Ladies and Gentlemen, relating to *Divinity, Philosophy, Love, Marriage, History, Physick, Law, Mathematics, Trade, &c.* from Tuesday September the 4th to Saturday Decemb. the 15th, 1694. This 15th Volume, with the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th, compleat the whole set for the Years 1693 and 1694. Printed for John Dunton at the Raven in Jewen street, where is to be had compleat Sets of the *Athenian Mercury*, each Set containing the History of the *Athenian Society*, 15 Volumes of the *Athenian Mercury*, and five supplements, &c. as also any single Volumes and *Mercurys* to compleat Sets, the price of each single Volume is 2s. and 6d.

THE Mild Lead Sheathing, (which lies

smooth, saves the constant charge of Graving, secures the Plank from the Worm, without hindrance to Sailing, and stiffens a Ship, so that she will carry more Sail; when as the Wood-sheathing obstructs her sailing, being rougher, and 30 or 40 times thicker on her sides, and is itself very destructive to her Plank and Seams; it being well known, that when one Plank is doubled, or clapt upon another, the undermost, in short time, will be *Doted*, which in a Wood-sheathing also Rots the Oakam in the Seams; whereas this Lead-sheathing preserves the Plank cool, smooth and sound, and the Oakam twice as long) having been left off about 17 Years ago by the then *Navy-Board*, (upon Complaints (only) That it did, in a more than ordinary manner, eat and corrode the *Bolts* and *Rudder-Irons*, after twenty Ships had been sheathed therewith, and no such extraordinary damage or decay in the Iron-work taken notice of, nor any Complaint thereof so much as heard of for near six Years together) is lately revived by some eminent Merchants of London, who within these six months have applied it to two Ships, and are now sheathing a third, of about 600 Tun, in Mr. Taylor's Dock by *Cuskolds-Point*, where any one that has a mind to see the manner thereof, may view the sheathing as the Workmen bring it on, which will be finish'd by the middle of this month, and the ship out of the Dock by *Easter*.

Such as desire further satisfaction about this sheathing, may find it, and all Objections against it Answered in a book sold at Mr. Hensman's shop in *Westminster-Hall*, Mr. Collins's by the *Temple Gate*, Mr. Symphon's at the *Harp* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, and Mr. Parkers at the *Leg and Star* in *Cornhil*; wherein also this *Mild-Lead* for covering Churches, Houses, and all purposes whatsoever, is shewn to be much cheaper, and better than *Cast-Lead* can be, and the Plumbers Suggestions decrying the same, proved therein to be idle, scandalous and false.

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